Scans: aliasanonyme Translation: fencer_x

Cleaning: Her Holiness Typesetting: fencer_x

Ever since starting high school, the listless Hirono hasn't been able to get his mind off of Himekawa, who works himself to the bone.
COLOR TITLE PAGE
44 p
New Series!!
初恋
はつこい
Kazuki Rai
一樹らい

THIS GREAT AND MIGHT HERO HERE...
...SHALL RESCUE YOU FROM YOUR IMPRISONMENT, PRINCESS!
I wound up never being able te fulfill...
...that promise I made to her five years ago.

UGGGHHH...
I THINK WE'RE ABOUT HALFWAY
HOW MUCH LEFT...?
THIS 10-K IS MURDER!
SWISH
SWISH
SWISH
I'D BE AN INSTANT BABE MAGNET IF I COULD JUST WIN A MEDAL!
DAMMIT..
plod
plod
They give 'em out to third
SO NOW WE'RE A BUNCH OF HORSES?
DIDYA HEAR?
THE GIRLS WERE GETTING FIRED UP EARLIER BETTING ON THE RACE
SWISH
SWISH
HUH?

'M JUST REALLY TIRED...
OIOIOI, WHAT'RE YOU GOING SO SLOW FOR?
WEEEELL YOU DON'T LOOK IT TO ME!
HIRO!
I THOUGHT YOU WERE PRETTY FAST YOU USED TO MAKE IT TO THE WINNERS' STAND A LOT.
YOU COULD PROBABLY GET A MEDAL IF YOU TRIED.
NO WAY, NO HOW.
THERE'S STILL THE TRACK TEAM
Come on, you lazy bums! Pick up the pace!
CRAP!
OKAY, I'M GOING ON AHEAD!
See ya!
Bye

.....
HAS HIRONO ALWAYS BEEN SO LAID-BACK?
I WENT TO ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL WITH HIM, AND HE SEEMED LIKE A REALLY EXCITEABLE GUY
YEAH, HE CHANGED WHEN HE ENTERED HIGH SCHOOL
IT'S LIKE HE LOST THE WILL TO LIVE
THE WILL TO LIVE? GEEZ...
I THINK I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED...
IT'S JUST A RUMOR,
BUT NEAR THE END OF MIDDLE SCHOOL...

HIS FIRST CRUSH DIED, APPARENTLY.
huff
chirp
chirp
WOW
GREAT WEATHER TODAY
huff
huff

SPLAT
wobble
wobble
WHAT'S WITH HIM?
HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S GONNA PASS OUT
huff
IS HE OKAY...?
STAND
HEY...
H...
lift
HUH...?

HEY!
YOU'RE BLEEDING!
EH?
I SAID YOU'RE BLEED-ING!
YOU'RE GONNA KEEP RUNNING LIKE THAT? DOESN'T IT HURT?
GEEZ, IT HURTS *ME* JUST LOOKING AT YOU. GIVE UP!

What's with him?
P-PLEASE LEAVE ME ALONE...
wheeze
wheeze
YOU LOOK ABOUT AT YOUR LIMIT.
STOP PUSHING YOURSELF. JUST TAKE IT EASY.
TH-
THAT'S NOT THE ISSUE...
IT MIGHT ACTUALLY BE FASTER FOR YOU TO WALK, EVEN.
THIS IS A MARATHON. YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO RUN.
HEY,
I'M NOT MAKING FUN OF YOU, BUT THIS IS JUST A SCHOOL-WIDE MARATHON, YOU REALIZE...?
THE MOST YOU'RE GONNA GET OUT OF IT IS MORE TIME TO WASTE
WHERE'S ALL THIS MOTIVATION COMING FROM?
.....
THERE'S
huff
huff
SOMEONE... I WANT TO SEE.

What's that supposed to mean? Is it some personal rule of his...?
HE SOUNDS LIKE THE MAIN CHARACTER OF SOME MANGA.

HE'LL NE-VER MAKE IT WITHOUT STOPPING
WE'VE STILL GOT ANOTHER 5 KILOMETERS TO GO HERE...

I FEEL LIKE IF I STOP NOW, I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO SEE HIM, SO...
I KEEP RUNNING.
THAT'S ALL IT IS.

WHAT A WEIRDO.
chatter
chatter
chatter
CONGRATS ON FIRST, KAWANISHI-KUN!!
YOU SMOKED ALL THE OTHERS!
Ahahaha!
WELL, I AM A LONG-DISTANCE RUNNER! SO IT'S NOT ALL THAT SURPRISING.
I THINK IT'S MORE AMAZING THAT IKEGAMI-KUN HERE GOT SECOND EVEN THOUGH HE'S JUST A SOCCER PLAYER!
Run through to the end!!
SCREW YOU! I'M GONNA PASS YOU UP NEXT YEAR!
Hahaha!

huff
GRAB
pant
pant
pant
pant

chatter

Crap, I'm slower than in middle school...!
Uph, I'm beat...
What place were you?
chatter
chatter

I'M TAKING HIM TO THE NURSE'S OFFICE NOW
HE'S JUST A LITTLE HYPERVEN-TILATED.
I-IS HE OKAY?!
HE'LL SETTLE SOON ENOUGH
H-HEY, WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?!
HIRO?!

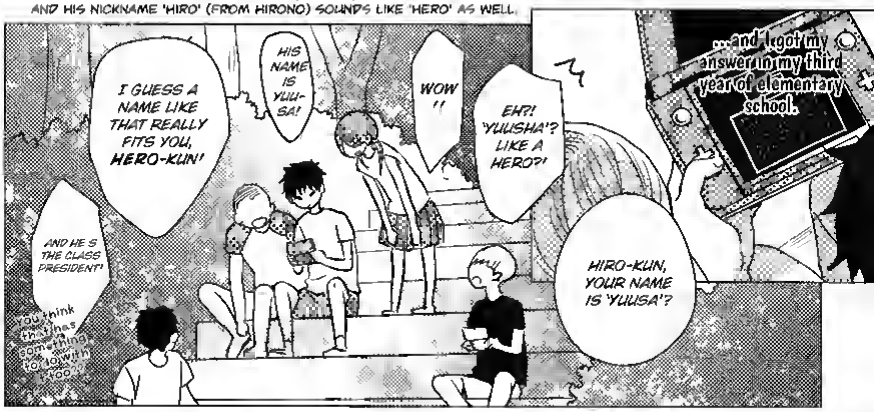
BUT-
UH...
JUST NOW...

SAME OLD HIRO!
So cool!
.....

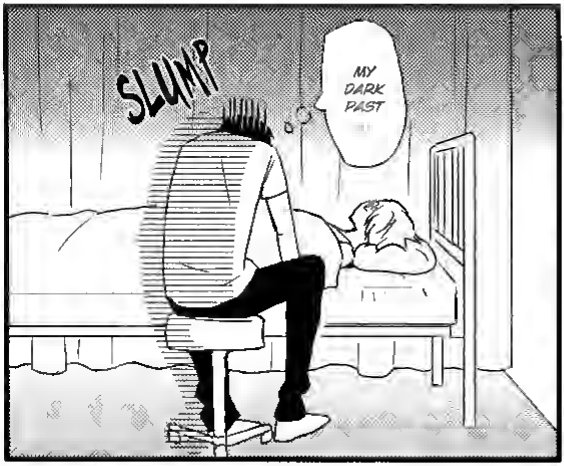
NURSE
DAMMIT
I COULDN'T HELP IT...
...WAS HIRO CRYING...?
HE TOTALLY MOVED ME.
THIS GUY IS AMAZING
HE RAN THE WHOLE WAY WITHOUT STOPPING EVEN ONCE
ZZZ...
I even gave a mental cheer when he came within sight of the finish line! What a loser...
I guess this type of guy really does exist...
And now we turn to the medal ceremony.

Boys' first place is...
rub
clap
clap
clap
For as long as I can remember,
I've loved being the best at things.
clap
clap
clap
clap
GREAT JOB, HIRO-KUN!
FIRST PLACE AGAIN!
Woohoo!!

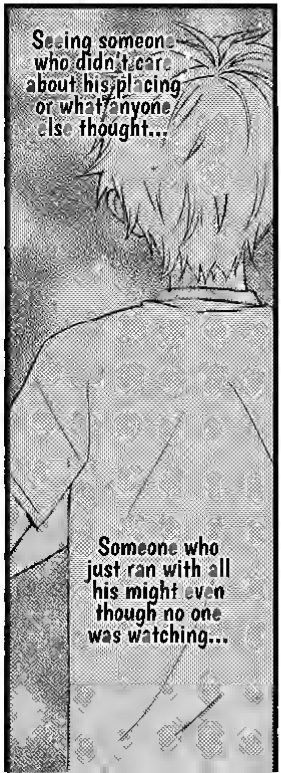
NOTE: HIS NAME IS A DOUBLE PUN: 'YUUSA' (YUUSHA) MEANS 'HERO' IN JAPANESE, AND HIS NICKNAME 'HIRO' (FROM HIRONO) SOUNDS LIKE 'HERO' AS WELL.


...and I got my answer in my third year of elementary school.
HIRO-KUN, YOUR NAME IS 'YUUSA'?
EH?! 'YUUSHA'? LIKE A HERO?!
WOW!!
HIS NAME IS YUU-SA!
I GUESS A NAME LIKE THAT REALLY FITS YOU, HERO-KUN!
AND HE'S THE CLASS PRESIDENT!
You think there has something to do with me?

I had some important quest I had to fulfill.
Mayb...I was the main character in this story...
...and all of my friends were the supporting cast!
"Are you a hero?!"
I was the HERO!
Yeah!


SLUMP
MY DARK PAST

.....


Seeing someone who didn't care about his placing or what anyone else thought...
Someone who just ran with all his might even though no one was watching...

81st
nd

I guess that's why...

At that moment, in my eyes...
HEY.. SENSEI?
I'LL KEEP AN EYE ON HIM, SO YOU HEAD BACK TO THE TRACK
OH, YOU'RE STILL HERE?
SWUSH
AH, YES MA'AM...
...he was dizzyingly bright.
DO YOU KNOW HIS NAME?
HM?
AH, LET ME SEE, I THINK IT WAS...

HIMEKAWA ICHIGO!
chatter
chatter
chatter
chatter

nod
nod
DO YOU REMEMBER ME?
FROM THE MARATHON LAST YEAR?
WOW, FOR SERIOUS? WE'RE IN THE SAME CLASS FOR SECOND YEAR??
AH

I'M HIRONO YUUGA.
I'M DEEPLY INDEBTED TO YOU FOR THAT!
LET'S HAVE A GOOD YEAR TOGETHER!
But...
YOU'RE NOT IN ANY CLUBS?
...I WORK PART-TIME.
OH. IT'S NICE THAT THIS SCHOOL DOESN'T PROHIBIT THAT, HUH.
...YES, I SUPPOSE IT IS
WOW he's energetic.
SURE.
Is it just me, or is he being super distant?
IS HE GIVING ME THE COLD SHOULDER...?
thump thump
Faster!!
MAYBE?
MAYBE HE'S JUST NERVOUS?
YOU TEND TO SPOOK GUYS LIKE HIM
Hang in there!
BUT EARLIER, I SAW HIM GETTING ALL FIRED UP PLAYING SOME WEIRD GAME TO SEE WHO COULD COME UP WITH THE COOLEST SIGNATURE PHRASE WITH SOME PUNKS FROM CLASS 5...
What the hell kind of game is that...?
REALLY?
tweet!!

Just when I was feeling a little excited...
Tsk...
What's his problem?
ALL RIGHT,
NOW, MOVING ON...
WHO'S GOT THE ANSWER TO THIS ONE?
MEME MEME MEEE!
I'VE GOT IT!!
OH...?
OKAY, HIMEKAWA
X = 3!
brimming with confidence
NOPE

THE NAPPING HIRONO
EH?
WHAT ABOUT YOU, BEHIND HIM?
ha ha ha ha ha
GAAAA AAAAAA AAAAH!!
SLUMP
-2?
RIGHT
YOU AND HIMEKAWA HAVE COMPLETELY OPPOSITE PERSONALITIES, HUH
It's pretty fun to watch!
YOU'VE ALWAYS HAD A GOOD HEAD ON YOUR SHOULDERS, SO PAY ATTENTION
YESSIR
murmur
murmur
No way!
EH?! HE DID IT IN HIS HEAD?!
AWESOME!
WHOA!

GLARE
SURE
I'M NOT
WHAT? HAHA
AND CLICKED HIS TONGUE AT ME?!
TSK.
HUH?! HE JUST THREW ME THE STINK EYE?!
BADUMP
BADUMP
Total points earned
Final grade A B C D E
9
10 stamina test
11
Hahaha!
GEEZ, HIRO! YOU'RE NOT EVEN TRYING!

YOU GOT A C?
YOU DID THE SHUTTLE RUN FIVE TIMES?!
YOU WERE THE ONE TO BEAT FOR SPORTS TESTS BACK IN MIDDLE SCHOOL!
NAH...IT'S JUST MY LEG'S BEEN HURTING ME LATELY...
ARE YOU SOME OLD FART?
Hahaha!

DO YOU HATE ME, HIMEKAWA?
Himekawa/Hirono

fwip

CLATTER
AFTER CHORES, WE JUST HAVE TO FILL OUT THE JOURNAL.
I'LL WRITE DOWN THE REST.
IT-IT'S FINE!
WHY?

SLIP
C'MON, GIVE IT HERE.
!

I'LL TURN THIS IN, YOU CAN GO ON AHEAD...
I'D LOVE TO, BUT YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE HAVING TROUBLE THERE.

I DON'T REALLY RECALL DOING ANYTHING THAT'D MAKE SOMEONE HATE ME, SO..
DID I DO SOMETHING TO YOU?
...SO WHAT IS IT?
.....
THAT'S... NOT IT...

SCRIBBLE
SCRIBBLE

HUH...?
YOU NEVER GIVE YOUR ALL AT ANYTHING YOU DO...
WHETHER IT'S STUDIES OR SPORTS
THOSE KIND OF PEOPLE ANNOY ME
YOU'T VERY EXISTENCE PISSES ME OFF
EH?
...BUT IT ACTUALLY HURTS WHEN YOU PUT IT SO BLUNTLY.
...I GUESS I *WOULD* LOOK LIKE A PRETTY BIG LOSER TO SOMEONE LIKE YOU, HUH...
...Oh. I get it now.
...SORRY IF I HURT YOUR FEELINGS...
He really...
OTHERWISE I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO LET PEOPLE KNOW HOW I REALLY FEEL.
I'M...TRYING TO SAY WHAT I MEAN...

...knows how to hit where it hurts.
HIMEKAWA
HUH?
I'VE LOST ANY AND ALL INTEREST IN THOSE KINDS OF THINGS MYSELF
DO YOU FEEL LIKE MEDALS AND TROPHIES AND CERTIFICATES ARE ACTUALLY WORTH ANYTHING?
WHY?
DUNNO
WHY DO YOU THINK?
AND WHAT'S WRONG WITH ACORNS?
MAYBE BECAUSE I'VE REALIZED I'M NOT REALLY SPECIAL AT ALL?
IT JUST SEEMS SO POINTLESS NOW, LIKE TRYING TO SEE WHO HAS THE BIGGEST ACRON

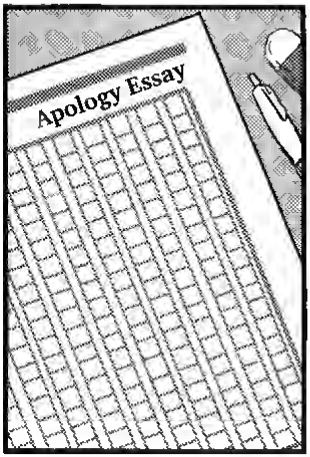
YOU JUST CAN'T MOVE PAST YOUR STUPID PRIDE.
I TRULY BELIEVE THERE'S WORTH IN TRYING YOUR BEST AT SOME-THING.
THAT'S HOW I LIVE.

.....
WELL GOOD FOR YOU.
BUT ALL YOU ARE, REALLY.
IS A SAD EXCUSE FOR A DUMB-AS-BRICKS STUDENT WHO CAN'T MANAGE TO EVER ACTUALLY ACHIEVE ANYTHING.

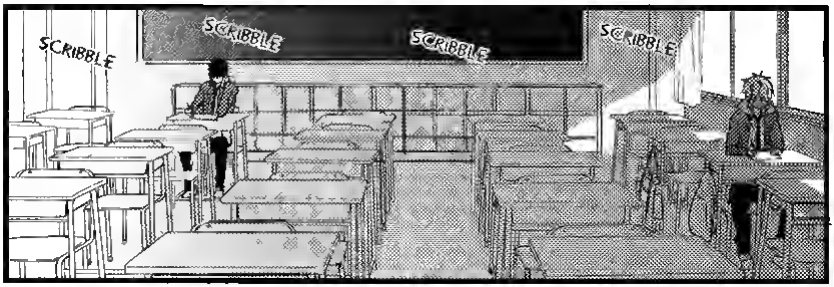
WHAP
GRAB

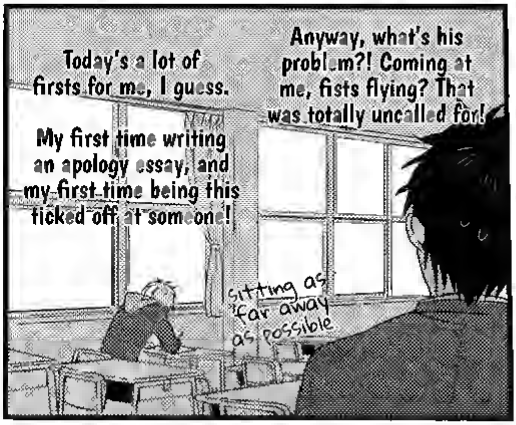
SCUFFLE
SCUFFLE
EEP!!
SLAM
HIME-KAWA-KUN?
HEY, WHAT ARE YOU...
HUH?
EH?!

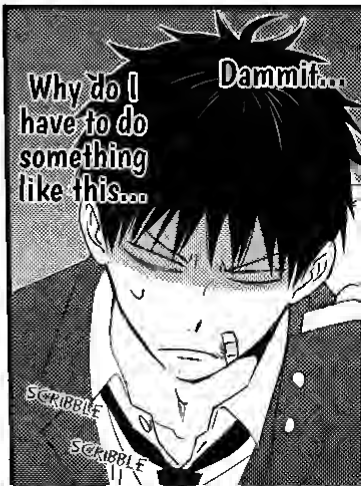
GAH!
HEY, HOLD UP!
CRASH
CUT IT OUT, YOU TWO!!


Apology Essay

PRINCIPAL


SCRIBBLE
SCRIBBLE
SCRIBBLE
SCRIBBLE


Today's a lot of firsts for me, I guess.
My first time writing an apology essay, and my first time being this ticked off at someone!
Anyway, what's his problem?! Coming at me, fists flying? That was totally uncalled for!
Sitting as far away as possible


Why do I have to do something like this...
Dammit...
SCRIBBLE
SCRIBBLE

I BULL-SHITTED MY WAY THROUGH THE ESSAY
TIME TO HEAD ON HOME..
SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE
...And my first time being jealous of someone else.
WELL, WHAT-EVER
erase

SHE DIED.
MY FIRST CRUSH.
I HADN'T SEEN HER IN AGES...
BUT I HEARD ABOUT IT NEAR THE END OF MY THIRD YEAR OF MIDDLE SCHOOL. THAT WAS WHEN I REALIZED THAT I WASN'T SPECIAL AT ALL.
?!
I MADE HER A PROMISE...
BUT BECAUSE OF MY STUPID PRIDE, I LET HER DOWN AND COULDN'T MAKE GOOD ON IT.
YOU'RE RIGHT, HIMEKAWA.
THERE IS MEANING IN TRYING YOUR BEST.
BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT I SHOULD AIM FOR ANYMORE.
THERE'S NOTHING THAT'S WORTH TRYING MY BEST FOR. LOW
THE PERSON THAT I WANT TO SEE...
ISN'T...

HERE...
sniffle
SOR-RY.
I DON'T THINK YOU'RE A SAD EXCUSE FOR A DUMB-AS-BRICKS STU-DENT.
IN FACT, I WANTED TO BE YOUR FRIEND
BYE.
.....

I-
I'M SORRY!
I'M SORRY, TOO!
I HAD NO IDEA!
I JUST MOUTHED OFF AND GOT ALL PISSED...
YOU SEE, I JUST...

I'VE... ALWAYS BEEN REALLY FRAIL.
I DIDN'T GET TO GO TO SCHOOL THAT MUCH, SO I'M STUPID...
AND NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY, MEDALS AND CERTIFICATES ARE JUST A DREAM.
SO IF I WANT TO EVER BE COOL...
CLENCH
...THEN I'VE GOT TO TRY MY BEST! THAT'S WHAT I'VE ALWAYS BELIEVED
THAT'S WHY WHEN YOU SAID THOSE THINGS TO ME,
"ALL YOU ARE, REALLY, IS A SAD EXCUSE FOR A DUMB-AS-BRICKS STUDENT."
IT WAS SO ON-POINT IT JUST SENT ME INTO A RAGE
OH... SO YOU WERE JUST JEAL-
I WAS JEALOUS OF YOU
I KNEW YOU WEREN'T A BAD GUY.
BUT WHEN I SAW YOU HOLDING BACK, EVEN THOUGH YOU HAVE SUCH TALENT, IT MADE ME SO ANGRY...

YOUR...
I MADE YOU MY RIVAL IN MY HEAD, BUT...
I..
I COULD BE THAT OTHER THING TOO
YOUR FRIEND.

...Pfft
Haha!

.....

SO WHAT'S THE PERSON YOU WANTED TO SEE LIKE, HIMEKAWA?
HE'S JUST A KID I USED TO PLAY WITH A LOT BACK IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
BUT SOME THINGS HAPPENED, AND HE CUT OFF ALL CONTACT WITH ME I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE HE IS NOW
HUH?
YOU MENTIONED THEM DURING THE MARATHON
"I FEEL LIKE IF I STOP HERE, I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO SEE HIM"
OH YEAH...

"MY HERO."
WHAT WAS HIS NAME?
I SEE
SOME THINGS...? DID YOU HAVE A FIGHT...?
MMM...I GUESS YOU COULD SAY THAT.
HUH.?
PRETTY FUNNY, RIGHT?
BUT THAT'S WHAT HE CALLED HIMSELF!
SO I CALLED HIM THAT TOO.

ARGH!
DAMMIT!
I'M GONNA BEAT THAT SEVEN-SKIP RECORD OF YOURS!
SO .
SO WHY DID HE CUT OFF CONTACT WITH YOU?
FOR FAMILY REASONS, I... USED TO DRESS LIKE A GIRL
splash
.....
YOU CAN'T TELL A SINGLE SOUL .

There's... no way...
I GUESS I SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISED
HE TOLD ME I WAS DISGUSTING... AND RAN AWAY FROM ME...
...No way.
THE GIRL HE THOUGHT HE'D BEEN PLAYING WITH WOUND UP BEING A GUY IN A SKIRT.
...AND HE...

...This guy is...

...ALWAYS CALLED ME HIS 'PRINCESS'.

To Be Continued